

*This is about the same as  
of the same kind as the other.*

Disalia, like other cities in California's San Joaquin Valley has changed. The outward appearance is about the same as it was six months or a year ago, but the change is in the determination of its citizens, grim, serious and in dead earnest about the war. You'd think the war was right in our backyard.

As a newspaper editor I've had my fingers on the pulse of the community for years. That pulse is now throbbing, steady, ~~and~~ confident, and very strong.

The vacant lots we used to play in are victory gardens, dotted with sprouting vegetables. I never realized there were so many gardeners.

The crops some farmers wondered about are all harvested. Victory Volunteers, men and women from stores, students from the schools and housewives helped. Now the next crop is being planted. There have been necessary wartime curtailments, certainly, but there is plenty for everyone.

The first contingent of Year Around Labor, a trainload of share-croppers, farmers from the foothills of the Ozark Mountains in Arkansas have arrived at the old Farm Workers Community Camp near Farmersville. They call it the Labor Replacement Center. Many of the ranch hands are already working on farms after learning the fundamental principals of California agriculture. They came from Yellville, Flippin, Clinton, Calico Rock, 44 Arkansas, Red Door Schoolhouse and Rocky Hill Arkansas. More are coming every week.

Last week I saw them ship out 25 tons of flattened tin cans, picked up in two collections by the War Salvage committee. This week we are completing the Victory Book Campaign and 4,000 books have already been turned in. Government men are working out of here now, making soil surveys for Guayule and planting will follow. Mayor J. Pierce Gannon and Councilman E.R. Putz and Chas. J. Hammer are coming up for re-election but are too busy with war projects and Civilian Defense work to campaign.

*Our Brwds  
Arkansas  
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"e are just starting the Red Cross War Fund campaign and Bucky Harris, chairman, is confident the local quota of \$26,800 will be reached. "e are all making our income tax returns. The Collector of Internal Revenue has set up a special office in the city hall and all-day long, weeks before the deadline, men and women walk in and out to file their returns. Then I see them go down to the postoffice or banks and buy more war bonds. We've passed the two million dollar bond mark here and now we are headed for our third million. Those bonds mean more war materials and security here at home after the war. I say we, because it's the same with everyone here at home, and most of us have relatives in the service.

There are a hundred and one ways mothers are keeping the home fires burning. This week, Visalians who keep the wheels of civic progress turning gathered to recognize five typical war mothers, their neighbors. They were honored at the Chamber of Commerce luncheon meeting and Major Lynne R. Mapes, commanding officer at a nearby army primary training field took time off to come to the luncheon and personally present the flags to the five and honor other mothers of sons in service. They five represented a total of 19 sons in service of their country. They were Mrs. Paul F. Cote, Mrs. W.J. Delanger, Mrs. A.M. Bryant, Mrs. E.D. Sear and Mrs. Mabel Elliott.

Today's news about service men is typical of the day-in, day-out news clearing my desk. Parents of Wynn Moss, a prisoner in Japan and Lt. George Middleton, a prisoner in Germany, have received pictures and letters from their sons; young women are volunteering for service in the WAVES, WAACS, SPARS and MARINE AUXILIARY. Thirty five were interviewed in one group. The Presbyterian church dedicated a service flag to 109 members now in service. Freda E. Fulmer was commissioned a second lieutenant in the U.S. Army Nurse Corps. City Librarian Anasue Hughes is an army librarian at Camp Haan. Private Lawrence Pilegard, former theater manager who completed basic training at Camp Roberts and has been assigned as an instructor there. Jack Wendell Waters reached Barragut, Idaho, for navy training.



Mr. and Mrs. L.T. ~~McDonald~~ McDonald have heard that their sons have recently met in Alaska following recent transfers. Don A. Willhide graduated from the mechanics school at the Lemoore Army Flying Field. Thomas P. Finch earned his wings as a second lieutenant at the Douglas Air Base. Mrs. Elmer Willits received a letter from her brother, Private Max Perry in Africa and Mr. and Mrs. V.C. Clevenger received a letter from their son, Sgt. Joe Clevenger in North Africa. Rheba Sumpter is leaving for training in the WAVES at Hunter College, New York. Marjorie Gallsner was promoted to the grade of leader in the WAACS at Des Moines. Pvt. Alex Gearhart was transferred from Washington to Fort Pierce, Florida. Lee Greenway was promoted to corporal at Camp Beal. Sgt. Anthony Frigulti, son of Mr. and Mrs. Frank Frigulti, has returned to duty in North Africa. William S. Maddox has promoted to the rank of lieutenant commander at Annapolis Naval Academy and Paul Finley, former police captain, has completed boot camp training in the navy at San Diego and is headed for San Francisco.

And so goes the news, day after day. Visalians aren't forgetting the Servicemen and they are certainly supporting them. Justly proud mothers, fathers and friends and Public Relations Officers in army and navy stations and training camps, keep the home town newspaper and radio station informed about those from here, now serving their country. The newspaper has found that this is the best read news in the entire paper.

Visalia will be just the same after the war is over and you'll have every reason to be proud of those you know here. I know, because I must keep in contact with things. We are doing a wonderful job at home. ~~They~~ We know you are doing a good job. We hope the war doesn't last too long, but whatever the length, we are in it to the finish, grimly determined to keep 'em flying, keep 'em rolling, keep 'em sailing and keep 'em marching, ever forward to ~~the~~ victory. They are saving the kisses, cheers and the handshakes for you when the job is done and you come home.



VISALIA, (Tulare Co.), Oct. \_\_\_\_\_ If the California Railroad Commission grants the application of the Postal Telegraph Company to abandon its Visalia office because the local manager, J. C. Ward, wishes to retire and the office will not pay on any other than a commission basis, the oldest telegrapher in the United States, in point of service, will send "thirty" across the wires ending a sixty continuous years at the key. It was at Mr. Ward's request the postal made application to close the office here.

In the history of Mr. Ward's career before he came to Visalia, there is a story of a romantic life that would test the imagination of the most adventurous youth of the present day. Thomas A. Edison knew, and still corresponds with this veteran operator who taught him the rudiments of the profession which Edison followed for many years. General Ulysses S. Grant, Civil War commander, had Ward as his operator during the bitterest moments of the campaign from '62 to '64. John W. Mackey, founder of the Postal Telegraph Company, and General Horace W. Carpenter, superintendent of the company for the Pacific states, were long personal friends of the Visalia man. James M. Flood and William O'Brien, familiar names to California historians, called him "Jack" long before they became millionaires in the Virginia City, Nevada, mines. Siberia and the Behring straits found him braving the blizzards and the snows in an effort to put across the Behring telegraph cable line. The Canadian Rockies dared him unsuccessfully to cross them with the wires which have tied the east with the west.

But the happiest moments of his life, Mr. Ward declares, were those spent as telegraph operator in Mount Clemens, Michigan, when he was 18 years of age and the Grand Trunk line was carrying Thomas



A. Edison as a newsboy through his little station daily. That was in 1861-62.

The newsboy Edison and the operator Ward became great chums. Edison was then but 16 years of age, but, unlike some boys, the present electrical wizard wanted to learn. Every time the train stopped at Mount Clemens the young Edison would rush into the operating room and there, in the few minutes allowed him while the train "took water", the embryo inventor would learn a new letter of the Morse code, perhaps two. Aboard the train Edison thumped out his practise on the seats of the car. At some distant station a friendly operator would let him "sit in" and call Mount Clemens for him so Ward could test the boy's learning. Thus, after months of tutorage Edison knew telegraphy, a profession he followed for many years. The friendship which sprang up between these two men has lasted and they correspond today quite frequently.

During the latter part of 1862 Ward was attached to Gen. Grant's staff as operator although he was born in Huntsville, Alabama, himself in 1844. In 1863 at Corinty, Miss., a shell struck the building in which he was operating injuring his hand to such an extent that he could no longer work the key and he returned to Chicago. Later, armed with a personal letter from Gen. Grant to General Carpenter, Ward crossed the great divide taking thirty days by stage coach from Chicago to San Francisco, and entered the service of the telegraph company on the Pacific coast going to Sacramento, there to work with the Western Union. The Bohring straits cable and wire line was projected and into Siberia went Ward. This work was later abandoned and the young man came back to Virginia City where he met John W.



Mackey and Flood and O'Brien.

At Virginia City, Nevada, Ward married a "home town" girl and in 1869 came to Visalia to set up a set of repeaters and to stay "about six months". He has been here ever since, the last thirty-five years as manager for the Postal Telegraph company.

One other bright spot stands out in Mr. Ward's memory. He recalls with considerable pride the year he was elected mayor of Visalia on the Republican ticket when Visalia was about ten to one Democratic.

Mr. Ward still conducts an art store in Visalia and the telegraph business is a side line which he wants to drop. He is the only man on Main street in Visalia who was engaged in business there forty years ago.

His son, Bert, is also an operator and he had two daughters, one of them, Mrs. Dr. N. E. Mac Arthur, a graduate of the University of California, died in Siberia in 1914 at the same place where Mr. Ward stationed while stringing the trans-Siberian telegraph line in 1866. Dr. Mac Arthur was stationed there as a physician for a mining company. Another daughter, Mrs. G. W. Pendergrass, lives in San Francisco.

Naturally this pioneer recalls the Musle Slough tragedy of 1880; he knows more about the Evans and Sontag episode of 1890-94 than perhaps, any one else in Visalia and while he talks but little of his earlier life he is always referred to by those who seek to settle disputes on early county history. He doesn't expect to close his store for some time yet but may later on retire from business life.

"I know I'll be lonesome without the sound of the Ticker", he



said, "but the time has come when I must send out 'thirty' to my hundreds of friends along the line. The strain is too much for what little there is in it."

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Byrnes.